



STATE OF ARKANSAS
MIKE BEEBE
GOVERNOR

July 16, 2007

Kevin J. Martin, Chairman
Michael J. Copps, Commissioner
Jonathan S. Adelstein, Commissioner
Deborah Taylor Tate, Commissioner
Robert M. McDowell, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

FILED/ACCEPTED

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

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~~Federal Communications Commission
Bureau / Office~~

RE: Universal Service Reform – WC Docket No.05-337 + CC Docket No 96-45

Dear Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is considering placing a cap on the use of the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless service. I am writing to express my opposition to this proposal, as it would result in a huge disservice to rural consumers, who want and need expanded and improved wireless services for public safety, economic development, and business and personal needs that are vital to them, just as Congress envisioned when it initially established the fund. A wireless-only cap is clearly anticompetitive in singling out wireless technology, which consumers are choosing more and more over landlines. Surely rural Americans deserve the same access to telecom services available to the rest of the country.

Consumers in rural parts of Arkansas are no longer content to have access only to traditional wireline telephone service and are demanding access to the benefits of mobility that only wireless service provides. As rural consumers travel from home to work or school, wireless service provides a very valuable safety tool, as well as access to broadband services where they are otherwise not available. This is a critically important consideration as we seek to bring access to the Information Age throughout our very rural State. Universal service support is essential if rural consumers are to be provided service and rates comparable to those available in urban areas.

Wireless technology plays an ever-increasing role in economic growth and is an

essential instrument in emergency situations, but if the recommended cap is implemented, many communities may never realize these benefits. In a country that prides itself on equality, we must not restrict access to rural citizens simply because of geographic location, especially when they have contributed for years to the USF.

I respectfully request your careful consideration of these facts as you seek to reform the existing fund. I ask you to find competitively neutral proposals that will slow fund growth, ensure accountability for the use of these funds, and promote the continued expansion and improvement of much-needed services in rural areas by targeting funds to high-cost areas, rather than by targeting reforms to wireless providers. I urge you to vote against the proposed cap on universal service support for wireless service. Thank you for your attention to this important decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Beebe", with a stylized, flowing script.

Mike Beebe

MB:jb